



PCT PLEDGE

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TELLING ANDREW WHERE TO GO

By PCT President Morty Rosenfeld

I do not recall a New York governor as universally despised by people working in public education as Governor Andrew Cuomo. His support for charter schools, his muscling of a property tax cap through the legislature, his manufacture of statistics place New York 38th in the nation in education, his insistence that teachers be evaluated on their students' test scores, his fundraising ties to Wall Street and real estate interests and his unbridled ambition to be President of the United States make him the embodiment of all that's wrong with the world teachers and support professionals inhabit. Here on Long Island, teacher union leaders are already bashing the new NYSUT leaders for not having found a suitable candidate to oppose our governor.

The good news is that where his poll numbers were until fairly recently sky-high, they have begun to plummet, to a significant degree because of his handling of education issues. It is altogether likely that there will be a challenge to him, probably from the Working Families Party. His likely Republican opponent, Rob Astorino, while having opted his own children out of the recent ELA tests, is a bonafide ultra conservative who is very unlikely to appeal to education union members.

On Monday April 28, at 4:00 P.M., Long Islanders will have a chance to show their opposition to Cuomo's leadership of our state. The honored guest of the Suffolk County Democratic Committee, the Governor will be appearing at Villa Lombardi's restaurant in Holbrook. Members of NYSUT locals from across the island will be assembling to demonstrate our opposition to his education policies and the devastating effect they are having on some of the best schools in the nation.

The call has gone out to PCT members to demonstrate our commitment to changing the direction of education policy in our state. While I know how hard it is to attend such an event right after a hard day's work, there come times when it is essential that we put ourselves out to do the work that no one else can do for us. Thousands of teacher union members on the streets of Holbrook sends a much more powerful message to our governor than the best lobbyists we have in Albany.

The PCT is always well represented at events like this. I'm sure you will want to do your part to make that an unbroken tradition. I'm looking forward to seeing you in Holbrook next Monday.

PCT ELECTIONS

All petitions to run for PCT officer positions were due to the PCT Office by the close of business on April 11, 2014. Candidates submitting petitions are as follows:

**PCT President
Morty Rosenfeld
Jason Obloj**

**PCT ELEMENTARY VP
Nina Melzer**

**PCT MIDDLE SCHOOL VP
Edward Hanlon**

**PCT HIGH SCHOOL VP
Debbie Riviezzo**

**PCT TREASURER
Jane Weinkrantz**

**PCT SECRETARY
Judi Alexanderson**

**CUPCT PRESIDENT
Janet Rutkowski**

**CUPCT VP
Ronni Pearce**

**CUPCT TREASURER
Jeannette Abrameto**

**CUPCT SECRETARY
Nellie Hirshman**

**SUPCT CHAIRPERSON
Eileen Vein**

**SUPCT SECRETARY/TREASURER
Marcia Goldberg**

**SUPCT ALTERNATE
Laura Vargo**

The PCT officer elections will be held on Wednesday, June 4, 2014. Voting will be at a member's building. Absentee ballots will be available at the PCT Office on May 19, 2014.

RETIREMENT DEADLINE

Members of the Teacher Bargaining Unit are reminded that Thursday, May 15, 2014 is the deadline for submitting letters of resignation for the purpose of retirement, **if members wish to be guaranteed of receiving the payout for**

their accumulated sick leave in the first payroll in July. Letters submitted after May 15 permit the District to withhold the payment for unused sick leave until July of 2015.

DISTRICT BUDGET

While we will receive more state aid next year, we will still not be getting as much as we did prior to the recent financial crisis. However, the aid increase and the reserves of the district combined with the freeze we took this year, have yielded a POB budget for next year that is essentially status quo. While at the moment, we have a few members with reduced assignments due to enrollment decline at our middle schools, experience suggests that when we know about retirements after May 15, some of these cuts will be covered. The PCT has a long history of working through the summer to try to see that every member is employed by the start of school.

That said, the time is at hand for our Board of Education to begin to do the political work necessary to produce budgets that break the property tax cap before we have to begin curtailing our academic programs the way many districts to the east of us have had to do. We should have started a long time ago to educate our community to what will happen when the needs of a rich academic program runs head-on into the austerity producing cap.

EXEC BD SAYS NO TO MERIT PAY

Part of the Albany budget agreement this year included a proposal of Governor Cuomo's to spend millions of taxpayer dollars on performance pay for teachers. Teachers judged to be highly effective would be entitled to a performance bonus negotiated between the local school district and union.

The PCT has a long history of opposition to performance pay schemes. Despite a long history of failure almost every place it has been tried, it's an idea that smarmy politicians sell to a public that deeply believes it to be proven to work in the business world and therefore should suit teachers too.

The PCT Executive Board has responded to new performance pay measures by declaring its opposition to it and taking a policy position to forgo any negotiations on this issue.

INEQUALITY FOR ALL

After the April meeting of the PCT Executive Board, SRC Reps were invited to stay to watch a recently released movie, *Inequality for All*, a film featuring former Labor Secretary in the Clinton administration Robert Reich. The officers were prompted to arrange a showing of the movie in that it shines a very bright light on the most serious economic problem facing the United States, stagnating wages and a shrinking middle class. Over the last 30 years, there has been a massive redistribution of wealth and income to the wealthiest Americans to the point where a handful of people

have more economic power than most of the nation combined.

Very interestingly, this decline of the middle class and the general stagnation in U.S. wages parallels the decline of the American labor movement. The movie was very well received by members of the Executive Board. In addition to making complex economic concepts easily accessible, Reich also demonstrates enormous teaching skills. The PCT owns a copy of the film. If groups of members in our schools wish to borrow it for a showing, just call the PCT office to make the necessary arrangements.

NYSUT ELECTIONS

On Saturday, April 5, delegates to the 2014 Representative Assembly held in New York City learned that they had elected a new team of NYSUT leaders. Dick Iannuzzi and his entire slate was defeated by a vote of 60 to 40 percent.

Elected to office were Karen Magee, President, Andy Pallotta, Executive Vice-President, Catalina Fortino, Vice-President, Paul Pecorale, Vice-President and Martin Messner, Secretary/Treasurer.

Key to Iannuzzi's defeat was a belief in the rank and file that NYSUT leadership had grown remote from the experiences of the membership in the trenches. A majority saw NYSUT as a late arriver to the battle against high stakes testing and the completely inept implementation of the Common Core State Standards, standards which many believed should not have been adopted in the first place.

The new officers ran on a platform that promised to reconnect NYSUT with its membership base, understanding that the power of the organization is only as strong as its ability to organize its membership. While this may sound like a simple thing to do, it is a daunting challenge for an organization that has for many years neglected organizing strong local unions in favor of putting most of its energies into political action.

PCT delegates to the Representative Assembly were proud to carry the support of our Executive Board for a new direction for our state organization. The PCT has a long tradition of being an organizing local union and has been frustrated by NYSUT's to support this approach. PCT president Morty Rosenfeld said, "I know Karen Magee and her team know what's wrong with NYSUT. I think we need to do everything we can to help her to turn our state union around and return it to the potent force it once was in our state."